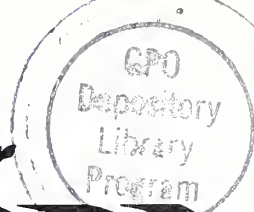


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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Communications Radio-TV Division Washington, DC 20250-1340 (202)720-4330

Letter No. 2630

October 1, 1993

Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy, and U.S. trade ambassador Mickey Kantor testified to the House Agriculture Committee in support of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Espy noted the benefits to U.S. agriculture of the agreement. Kantor said NAFTA will produce jobs in many segments of the U.S. economy, including agriculture. Espy has also testified to the Committee on the proposed reorganization of USDA headquarters.

USDA photo by Bob Nichols.



HEALTH PLAN AND RURAL AMERICA -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy says the President's health care plan addresses some of the long-standing health care problems that have plagued rural communities, and increases the availability of care for families. The Health Security Act allows states flexibility to develop health plans which suit their specific geographic needs, assuring that the needs of rural states won't be forgotten. Under the current health care system a total of 34 million people live in rural areas with inadequate health care. Seventeen percent of rural Americans have no health insurance, including 25 percent of farm families. The health care proposal allows self-employed farmers to deduct 100 percent of their health care costs. Currently the self-employed can deduct only 25 percent of their health care costs. "With the plan we will help to ensure that rural families have the care and feeling of security that all Americans deserve," Espy says.

ACQUIRING FARMLAND -- A study shows that owners acquired 51 percent of their farmland by purchase from a nonrelative, and acquired another 18 percent in purchase from relatives. The remaining 31 percent of farmland was acquired by inheritance, gift, and other methods. Farm operators acquired a higher proportion of their farmland through purchase than did owners who are not farm operators. A new publication, "Acquiring Farmland in the United States," reports that an average 3.5 percent of farmland changes hands each year. Farmland ownership is concentrated. Less than 2 percent of the population own all U.S. farmland, and of that number only 4 percent of all farmland owners hold nearly half, 47 percent, of the farmland. **Contact: Gene Wunderlich (202) 219-0425.**

EXPORTS FORECAST -- The Fiscal Year 1993 forecast for U.S. agricultural trade is projected at \$42.5 billion, and imports are expected to be a record \$25 billion. Imports are advancing on stronger shipments of cattle and vegetables. During 1993 U.S. export prospects weakened for coarse grains, cotton and tobacco. But there have been offsetting gains during the year in high-value exports, particularly horticultural commodities. **Contact: Thomas Warden (202) 219-0822.**

MEAT GRADING FEE INCREASE -- USDA has raised by 5 percent the hourly fee for its meat grading and certification services. The new rates will be \$35 an hour up to \$70 an hour for holidays. The higher rates will offset costs of mandated salary and health benefit increases and administrative overhead. USDA's meat grading and certification services are provided to packers and processors nationwide on a fee-for-service basis. Use of the service is voluntary. **Contact: Clarence Steinberg (202) 720-6179.**

SUGAR CONSUMPTION -- U.S. sugar production in fiscal year 1994 (Oct. 1, 1993 to Sept. 30, 1994) is forecast at 7.5 million tons, down nearly a quarter of a million tons from 1993 figures due largely to reduced sugar beet production in Minnesota. U.S. sugar consumption in fiscal year 1994 is forecast at 9.2 million tons, up nearly 2 percent from 1993 figures. The growth rate is close to the average for the previous 5 years. **Contact: Peter Buzzanell (202) 219-0886.**

AG INFO BY STATE -- USDA has published a report presenting agricultural information for each State and the nation. Included are data on land use, agricultural production, farm income, value of assets, population, and selected characteristics of farms such as size, tenure and farm organization. "U.S.-State Agricultural Data" cost is \$12.00 per copy. Order toll free by dialing 1-800-999-6779. **Contact: Letricia Womack (202) 219-0696.**

RESEARCH AWARD -- The highest scientific honor of USDA's Agricultural Research Service has been awarded to Forrest Nielsen, who oversees nutrition research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Human Nutrition Research Center in Grand Forks, ND. Dr. Nielsen's research has contributed to the acceptance of certain trace elements as essential to human health. Ultratrace elements, such as boron, nickel, arsenic, silicon and vanadium are required in only millionths of a gram per day, and can be obtained by eating a wide variety of foods. Nielsen received a cash award, plaque and additional research funds to study the role of silicon in bone formation. **Contact: Judy McBride (301) 344-2861.**

RURAL ECONOMY -- Farm program payments have little significance for a majority of U.S. farmers and farm-based communities. But studies show that government payments do play an important role in income support and longrun income stability for many U.S. farmers who produce wheat, feed grains, rice and cotton. Counties with significant government payments are concentrated in the spring wheat and barley areas of the Northern Plains, the winter wheat and sorghum areas of the Central Plains, the cotton, wheat and sorghum areas of West Texas and Southwest Oklahoma, and the cotton, rice, and wheat areas of the Mississippi Delta and Gulf Coast. Cuts in program payments will alter the structure of farming in these areas, which are prime targets for rural development initiatives to diversify their economic base. **Contact: Fred Hines (202) 219-0525.**

RURAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM -- USDA will conduct a rural development forum in the nation's capital on October 8, 1993 to address the challenges facing rural communities. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy says, "We need to develop new and improved strategies to make rural areas and rural people full partners in America's future, to enable them to be competitive and successful in the 21st century. Several regional rural development forums will be held later across the nation. The October 8 rural development forum is one of several issues forums that Secretary Espy is conducting nationwide. **Contact: Jim Brownlee (202) 720-2091.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1895 -- Integrated pest management will have a role in the Clinton Administration's effort to reduce pesticide residue levels on crops. **Maria Bynum** reports on the application of this strategy for the control of agricultural and urban pests. (Weekly reel - 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1377 -- Low fat food trends; berry clever packaging; getting trees and shrubs ready for bed; new meat care labels; another huge U.S. apple harvest expected. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1887 -- USDA News Highlights; farmers and the Clinton Health Care Plan; 1992 farmer owned reserve intentions; satisfying the world's sweet tooth; restoring flooded farm land. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1640 -- Pass the gypsum, please; in praise of grazing; "Fly" book unveiled; fly expert system; "buggy" about names. (Weekly reel of research stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, October 12, U.S. crop production, crop & weather update, world ag supply & demand; Wednesday, October 13, world ag & grain production, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation; Thursday, October 14, ag resources outlook; Friday, October 15, milk production. These are the **USDA reports we know about in advance**. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359. COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Patrick O'Leary** reports on the 50th birthday of Smokey Bear; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on removing ink from recycled paper; **Will Pemble** reports on the new Flame grapefruit; **Dave Luciani** on students interested in science at Michigan State University.

ACTUALITIES -- Secretary of Agriculture **Mike Espy** testifies before the House Ag Committee about NAFTA; USDA meteorologist **Dave Stefanski** with a weather and crop condition update; USDA economist **Ed Allen** on the U.S. wheat situation and outlook.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on new safety labels for meat; **Patrick O'Leary** reports on biodiversity, the theme of World Food Day 1993; **DeBoria Janifer** reports on a model conservation farm.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update** with anchors **Eric Parsons** and **Lori Spiczka**. 4:30 of USDA farm program information in news desk format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 4, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

THIRD CROP OF HAY...looks super, says **Cliff Mitchell** (KASM, Albany, MN). It is most welcome in his dairy area because the first and second crops had moisture problems. There will be a shortage of hay in the region this winter, which could affect milk prices. The first killing frost hit in late September. Corn had not matured. Cliff covered live the Dairy Expo in Madison, WI.

LIVESTOCK GROUPS...in Indiana and Ohio are conducting studies and making plans to expand operations, says **Ron Powers** (WOWO, Ft. Wayne, IN). One of their strong points is being located close to the huge east coast markets. Ohio has a packing plant task force underway. Ron says coffee shop talk is generally favorable toward NAFTA. It is regarded as an opportunity to expand ag exports.

WHAT'S IT WORTH?...is the question being asked by wheat producers, says **Larry Ristvedt** (KFGO, Fargo, ND). Milling tests have shown vomitoxin goes into bran, not flour. Larry says some elevators are offering only 20 cents a bushel.

Farm Broadcasters Letter



Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1340

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SAFETY SERIES...broadcast during the recent farm safety week featured farm safety for kids, and the dangers of grain bin suffocation, says **Susan Risinger** (WJAG, Norfolk, NE). Frost in mid-September hit late planted lowland soybeans. Congratulations to Susan, she recently won the Aksarben Gold Award for service to agriculture. Aksarben? Nebraska, backwards.

FARM SAFETY DAY CAMP FOR KIDS...was part of a series of stories produced and aired during Farm Safety Week by **John Everly** (KDTH, Dubuque, IA). The hay crop in John's region did not do well this season, less quality and quantity than last year. Alfalfa was hurt this past spring by winter kill, leaving many producers with mostly grass. John says dairy producers will be buying hay in the Dakotas and Michigan.

HOW TO PRESERVE...and conserve underground water is the issue confronting the Kansas Agriculture Ogalalla Task Force, says **Dave Sparks** (KGNO, Dodge City, KS). Dave covered task force discussions for his listeners during the group's recent meeting in Garden City.

VIC POWELL 
Chief, Radio & TV Division